



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF EDMOND

FIRST LOOK

JUNE 2021



FEATURE ARTICLE:
Core Practice #6:
SERVE COMMUNITY
UPDATE ON

Missions

An interview with Tom Langdon
on the status of our FPCE Mission Partners

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT:
VBS 2021

JUNE
ANNOUNCEMENTS

VISION MOMENT

FPCE Missions Update

Excerpts of an interview by Faith Koester with her grandfather, Head of Missions - Tom Langdon

Missions have been an integral part of FPCE from the beginning, and they are still so important to our doctrine and identity as a congregation. FPCE has a rich history of spawning missions and missionaries, and great joy has come from our involvement with the frontline efforts we have been putting forth for decades. We categorize our mission partners as either an international mission or a local mission, and we strive to exert equal efforts to rescue, restore, and develop through our mission outreach.

Our international mission partners from this congregation have had quite a rough year in respect to the tight regulations and restrictions brought on by the Covid-19 outbreak. One of the missionaries that we have been supporting for the last 30 years, **Phil Tappert**, had to return to the states from his location in France and is in a holding pattern awaiting approval from the French government to return to the country. Another of our missionaries, **Lauren Higgenbotham**, was also forced to leave her post in India to return to the states; however, she has reoriented her ministry to reach the Indian community living in Dallas and help establish church plants for them there. **Molly McGee** was also sent back to the U.S. from India, and she decided not to stay in church-supported missionary work; but instead, she went back to work as a C.P.A. Molly now volunteers her time with the Indian community in Dallas and is very involved with personal discipleship within that community. **Kim D.** has been able to stay in the field working on evangelism and church

7CORE | PRACTICES

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planting in the middle east. The **Ewings** are still hard at work in Tokyo, Japan doing work with college-aged people with about 10 people in their mission group. They have just celebrated the birth of their daughter, and they also have a son; they are thriving!

We also support some international missions on location that are not necessarily affected by Covid directly. **Upendo** orphanage in Kenya currently has 55 children in their care, doing the work of rescue and restoration – getting children off the streets, giving them a home, providing them with education, and also sharing the gospel with them. In July of 2020, a group from FPCE was scheduled to go to Hiland, Uganda to support the church build there. Our group was unable to go, but the church was built – the 11th that FPCE has partnered with in the area – and a pastor has been put in place to begin a community of faith there. We hope to be able to go again in the future.

FPCE has a deep and long-standing relationship with the Presbytery of Eastern Uganda and support the establishment of primary care clinics in Uganda that are making a big impact in the villages that they serve. We support the **CBIT Bible College** in Eastern Uganda that serves south western Kenya as well as northern Tanzania. They produce 15-20 pastors per year to go and serve churches in that part of the world. We also support a Reformed Presbyterian seminary in Cairo, Egypt. It serves **The Synod of the Nile** that is busy planting churches all along the Nile. Further, FPCE's former pastor, Mateen Ellass, heads up the **Voice of Truth** ministry, which trains Arab-speaking pastors in the U.S. and abroad, which continues to make a huge impact.

Locally (in the U.S.), we support pastor training through our own Presbytery of the ECO denomination. **Three Tav-**

erns Church is a church plant on the southside of St. Louis, MO that we are excited to champion. **John Crosby** is doing great training for young pastors in ECO, and we proudly support him as well. Pastoral training is a huge part of our efforts both in the U.S. and abroad.

College ministry is another facet of our missions outreach through FPCE. Our purpose is to partner with future influencers who will affect generations to come. Numerous people from our congregation have been active in StuMo and go on to become missionaries or pastors. **Brandon Boyd** is with Cru in Stillwater at O.S.U. and **Corey MaKeever** is one at U.C.O., and we are proud to count them on our roster of our mission partners!

Coffee Creek Riding Center was started by Lucille Fancy, a member of our congregation and now her daughter runs it. **Whiz Kids** is a tutoring & mentor program in OKC which our church supports, as well as the **OK Messages Project** founded by Cheri Fuller and connects incarcerated parents through reading to their children. **Kairos Ministry** is an in-prison, 48-hour version of Pilgrimage. His **House Ministry** which helps women get their feet on the ground after release from prison.

Hope Force rescues, but also restores with disaster recovery teams. We also want to develop sustainable lives grounded in Christ. **City Rescue Mission** gives people a place to go, rescuing them from the streets; **Hope Center** helps with basic human needs, and **Project 66** gives food for those who need it. **Edmond Mobile Meals** gives food to anyone in Edmond who needs it, along with **Breakfast on Boulevard** which we have supported for years through First Christian

Church. **Search Ministry** reaches out to the business community to insert Christ into secular businesses. **One by One** helps with the education of people who have sexual orientation conflict, and the **Hope Pregnancy Center** helps with crisis pregnancy situations. **Turning Point** helps with development of our Edmond community as does the **Community Thanksgiving Dinner** from its inception back in the 1980's. Of course, Covid thwarted

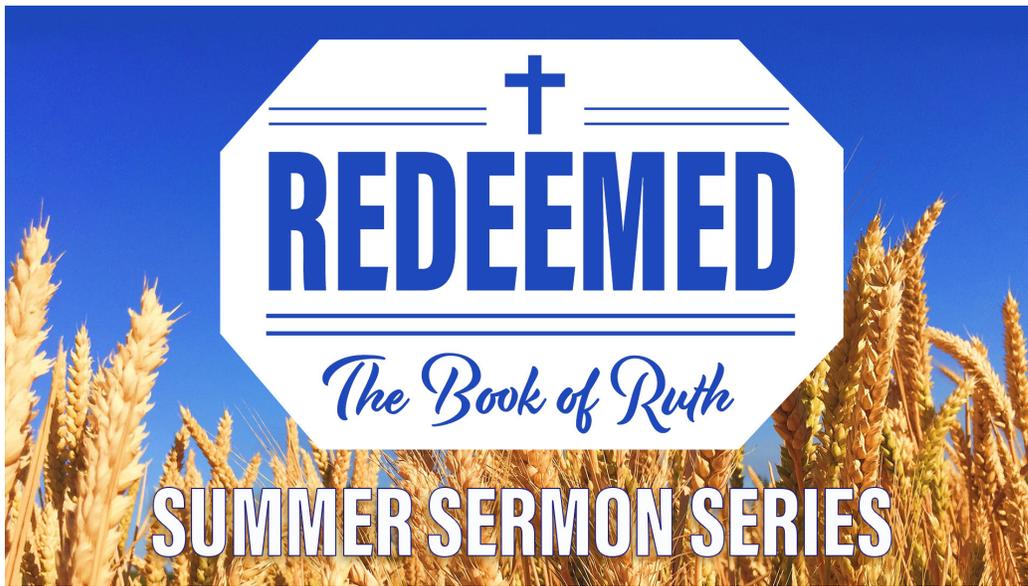
many of these events in 2020, but we hope to bring them back in 2021.

The recent economic shutdown across the globe will affect world-wide ministries for years to come. We must be diligent in our efforts to continue to spread the Good News of Christ, as Jesus has called us to do. We know that this congregation will do its part, and we are glad for the privilege of participating in God's work in Edmond and our world! ■



WordGo App

Micro-groups will be using the WordGo app for our summer sermon series on Ruth. You can sign up for the study as a group or individually. This is an excellent new way to dive deeper into the Ruth sermon series. You will need to download the app, but we will have tech support available through designated staff people if you need to call the church for assistance (341-3602). We hope you'll give it a try! Check it out on our website: fpcedmond.org/media.



Student Ministry Summer Camp 2021

FPCE Student Ministries is going to **Orange Beach, Alabama June 28 - July 2**. Middle School & High School are going to the same camp location but will have unique experiences. Find more information on our feed of the Lift Fpce Facebook page. Registration is \$50 and deadline is **ASAP!** We have a few more high school spots available, but they are filling up quickly. Please text/email Alyssa Dees if you are interested (307-797-0130 / adees@fpcedmond.org). We want to make sure money is not the reason your student won't attend camp - please reach out to me if finances is a stretch or concern. On **June 13th at 10am**, there will be a parent meeting in the sanctuary for the parents of those who have signed up.

FIRST, BY THE NUMBERS

- We are nearing a milestone of 20,000 media plays on our app!
 - We celebrated 5 graduating high school seniors this year from our FPCE family
 - Each graduate received, on average, 50 notes of encouragement from our congregation. Thank you!
 - We have 53 students signed up for camp right now, which is more students than we've ever taken to camp!
 - We had an all-time high number (over 60) for the year of students attending the final LIFT & the Holy Spirit was among us!
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| ■ 2021 YTD Budgeted Income: \$838,394 | ■ 2021 YTD Actual Income: \$900,671 |
| ■ 2021 YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$892,680 | ■ 2021 YTD Actual Expenses: \$789,393 |



Coffee & Donuts in the Great Hall

Please enjoy a time of connection and fellowship in the Great Hall with coffee & donuts! Before and between worship services is a perfect time to reconnect with friends that you might have been out of touch with for some time. Make plans to join up and share some time together in the Great Hall as the summer continues.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

VBS: Press Play

by: Danielle Jones
Kids Ministry Director

One of the best events that happens at FPCE every year is Vacation Bible School. I know this because I grew up in this church and can remember attending VBS as a very small and ornery child! (For the record, I am not the only staff person who grew up in this church and may fall into the "ornery" category!) The point is that VBS has historically been a success for many, many years at FPCE.

This congregation rallies in amazing ways to welcome children from the community, as well as our own precious FPCE Kids, and bring fun and love and JESUS to their summer experience. Volunteers of every age selflessly pour into these kids for a week (sometimes much longer than a week, in preparation) and diligently plant seeds of faith, trusting that God will do mighty things in time through each little life impacted.

In 2020, the Kids Ministry staff had to think quickly to remedy the challenge of providing VBS despite the gathering restrictions brought on by Covid. Our solution was to equip families with daily activities that linked to video lessons



so that they could hold their own versions of VBS with a small group of friends or neighbors. But this year, we are so excited to reconvene for VBS live and in person!

VBS 2021 will be held **June 21 - June 24** from **9:00am to 11:00am**. We will begin in the sanctuary and then move outside for the majority of the morning. Kids and volunteers are encouraged to dress in clothes they can get dirty and to wear their VBS shirts that they will receive on Monday morning. We hope that each person will also bring a water bottle labeled with their own name and wear sunscreen.

Participants are ages 4 years old (by June 21st) through current 4th graders. Get ready, kids, because we are going to have one WILD week of VBS where we can laugh together, play together, sing together, and even enjoy a snack together! WHAT?! Press "PLAY", and come join us!